

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Child and Family Services Agency



Administrative Issuance: CFSA - 08-13

TO: All CFSA Staff

FROM: Roque Gerald, Interim Director

DATE: October 22, 2008

RE: Directives for Closure of Investigations Opened Prior to July 1, 2008

The Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) is committed to the timely and professional closure of all Child and Protective Services (CPS) investigations. The recent increase in hotline calls to the Agency, however, has extended the length of time that some of the investigations have remained open.

This administrative issuance provides specific directives for safe closure of investigations which opened prior to July 1, 2008. When effecting closure, the assigned CFSA staff shall focus on the current safety and risk factors for children and families while simultaneously making concerted efforts to minimize the length of time the Agency remains engaged in the families' lives. The safety, permanency, and well-being of all children served by the District's child welfare system shall remain paramount.

The following steps are to be completed for investigations that were opened prior to July 1, 2008:

1. The assigned social worker shall assess documented interviews conducted for the victims, maltreater, and reporter to determine whether the alleged abuse or neglect occurred.
2. The assigned social worker shall review the documentation to assure that all the victims, as well as the maltreater, have been interviewed at least one time.
3. If a case does not allege Educational or Medical Neglect, and contacts have not been made with the school or medical contact, both paper documentation and FACES data entry shall indicate "non-applicable" (NA) for the school contact; if a child is not entered in the immunization data base, the worker shall indicate N/A for medical contact. If school or medical provider contact is required as part of the current safety assessment, then those contacts shall be made and documented in FACES accordingly.
4. Each child shall have a current placement Risk and Safety Assessment which includes documenting answers to the following questions:
 - a. Is the Child safe in today's placement? Is it appropriate to remove the child?
 - b. Is there a risk of abuse or neglect? Is that risk low, medium, or high? Is it more appropriate to refer the case to an In-home unit or to a Collaborative?
 - c. Is the allegation unfounded, inconclusive, or substantiated?
5. Complete an abbreviated case summary based upon the available information and then close the investigation.

6. If an investigative worker is initially unable to locate the family or one of the victims, the worker shall increase efforts but not close the investigation prior to following the steps outlined in Administrative Issuance (AI) CFSA-08-2, *Immediate Requirements for All CPS Investigations*.
7. If the investigative worker is still unable to locate the family after thorough compliance with steps 1-12 described in AI CFSA-08-2, the worker shall complete a CPS alert and submit it to the CFSA Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) office. The CFSA ICPC office shall then forward the alert to the ICPC office in each of the 50 United States. Only then may the worker close the investigation and return the file to CPS. Assigned CPS staff shall then further attempt to ensure that the family was unable to be located by contacting the District's Income Maintenance Administration (IMA), the District of Columbia Public Schools System (DCPS) and the Children's National Medical Center (CNMC) after 45, 90, 180 and 360 days.
8. If at any point the family is confirmed to be living out of CFSA's jurisdiction, the assigned worker shall mail a letter to the local jurisdiction's CPS unit. The letter shall describe the allegation and request that the jurisdiction determine whether services are to be provided in that jurisdiction. The CFSA investigation shall be closed by CFSA once the letter is sent to the other jurisdiction.
9. Safety Assessments/Risk Assessments should only be completed by a worker if they have seen the child. A safety or risk assessment that has been completed by someone other than the worker may be transcribed in the record but it should be clear who completed the assessment and when they did it. A case should not be presented for closure without a current risk and safety assessment. When the investigation determines that the allegations should be substantiated, but the victim is now out of the jurisdiction, the investigator shall consult with his or her supervisor to determine whether the supervisor can override the risk and safety assessment for that particular investigation.